CLAIMS:

5   What is claimed is:

1.   A method of limiting an application program's usage by
      a user comprising the steps of:

10   executing the application program;

      concurrently starting a timer; and

15   stopping execution of the application program if the
      timer registers a time equal or greater than a pre-
      determined time.

2.   The method of Claim 1 further comprising the step of
20   ascertaining whether the user is permitted to use the
      application program before executing the application
      program.

3.   The method of Claim 2 wherein the step of ascertaining
25   whether the user is allowed to use the application
      program further comprising the step of ensuring that
      there is not a time interval restriction.

4.   The method of Claim 3 further comprising the step of
30   making sure that the time interval has elapsed before
      the user is allowed to use the application program if
      there is a time interval restriction.

5. The method of Claim 4 wherein the pre-determined time is determined by an administrator.

5   6. A computer program product on a computer readable medium for limiting an application program's usage by a user comprising:

code means for executing the application program;

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code means for concurrently starting a timer; and

code means for stopping execution of the application program if the timer registers a time equal or greater than a pre-determined time.

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7. The computer program product of Claim 6 further comprising code means for ascertaining whether the user is permitted to use the application program before executing the application program.

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8. The computer program product of Claim 7 wherein the code means for ascertaining whether the user is allowed to use the application program further comprising code means for ensuring that there is not a time interval restriction.

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9. The computer program product of Claim 8 further comprising code means for making sure that the time interval has elapsed before the user is allowed to use the application program if there is a time interval restriction.

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10. The computer program product of Claim 9 wherein the pre-determined time is determined by an administrator.

5 11. An apparatus for limiting an application program's usage by a user comprising:

means for executing the application program;

10 means for concurrently starting a timer; and

means for stopping execution of the application program if the timer registers a time equal or greater than a pre-determined time.

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12. The apparatus of Claim 11 further comprising means for ascertaining whether the user is permitted to use the application program before executing the application program.

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13. The apparatus of Claim 12 wherein the means for ascertaining whether the user is allowed to use the application program further comprising means for ensuring that there is not a time interval restriction.

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14. The apparatus of Claim 13 further comprising means for making sure that the time interval has elapsed before the user is allowed to use the application program if there is a time interval restriction.

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15. The apparatus of Claim 14 wherein the pre-determined time is determined by an administrator.

16. A computer system for limiting an application program's usage by a user comprising:

5   at least one memory device for storing code data; and

       at least one processor for processing the code data to execute the application program, to concurrently start a timer, and to stop execution of the application

10   program if the timer registers a time equal or greater than a pre-determined time.

17. The computer system of Claim 16 wherein the processor further processes the code data to ascertain whether

15   the user is permitted to use the application program before executing the application program.

18. The computer system of Claim 17 wherein the processor further processes the code data to ensure that there is

20   not a time interval restriction.

19. The computer system of Claim 18 wherein the processor further processes the code data to make sure that the time interval has elapsed before the user is allowed to

25   use the application program if there is a time interval restriction.

20. The computer system of Claim 19 wherein the pre-determined time is determined by an administrator.

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